Buses Back: 5-Month-Old Solution

Worth taking a second look! The buses are finally back on the streets of New Haven.

(M-T Photo by Nick Heyer)

by Matt Borenstein
Modern Times Staff

Bus service is back in New Haven. Despite the fact that nothing has changed during the last four months in terms of available money, driver demands, political officials, or citizen outrage, Meskill has come up with a subsidy for resumption of bus service.

NEWS ANALYSIS

On November 25, bus drivers and mechanics walked off the job when the Connecticut Company asked them to absorb its operating deficits in the form of an 80¢ per hour wage cut. One month before, the State Assembly had passed legislation permitting funds to be released from the Public Service Tax Fund.

Meskill vetoed the legislation and termed the situation a labor-management dispute while over 100,000 people in the state went without transportation.

Present Solution

After unsuccessfully trying to get cities to assume the financial burden of bus operation, Meskill finally came through with a full state subsidy of bus operations.

Based on Meskill's committment, the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU), representing bus drivers and mechanics, was able to reach a two year agreement with the Connecticut Company. According to John Thompson, ATU business agent, the two year contract provides a 6.2% economic improvement per year (5.5% in wages and 0.7% in fringes). For the first

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New Haven

Volume III, Number 22 April 1 - 15, 1973

Editorial

Fight For Women's, Labor's Rights

Major reforms in a social system are seldom achieved without a sharp struggle by many people over a long period of time. It took fifty years of protest to lead to the emancipation of American slaves. It took ninety years of agitation to bring about the eight-hour day for American working people. It took seventy years of effort to get the vote for American women. It has taken fifty years of struggle to reach the point where, on March 15, Connecticut became the twenty-eighth state to ratify the Equal Rights for Men and Women Amendment to the Constitution, which provides: "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex."

This amendment is not solely a product of the present women's liberation movement. It was first brought before the Congress in 1923 as a continuation of the women's suffrage movement that had achieved the vote for women with the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920. The conservatism of the 1920's killed hopes for the amendment then.

But with the liberalism of the New Deal and the great movement of women into the labor force that took place in the "Rosie the Riveter" days of World War II, the amendment was brought up several times again. The conservatism of the 1950's doomed it once more. But the fast-spreading women's movement of the 1960's revived it again. Only ten more states now need ratify it for it to become the law of the land.

Archaic Laws Eliminated

This hard-won amendment establishing a uniform and permanent basis for legal action and efforts to end sex discrimination represents a reform of truly major proportions and opens the possibility for a great step forward for American women. Under it, a network of archaic laws based on psychological, social, or cultural stereotypes (such as women being the "weaker" or "fair" sex) would be struck down.

Laws that appear to be sex-neutral but whose impact falls disproportionately on one sex in such a way as to constitute a deprivation of rights and opportunities —— such as laws forbidding women to enter certain occupations —— would also fall. In the area of marriage, divorce, and family legislation, there would be an equalization of relationships and responsibilities before the law. (For example, husbands would no longer have sole management rights over common property.)

The amendment would not permit criminal laws —— such as the prostitution laws —— that affect the sexes unequally, Laws denying equal participation of women with men in business and government would be invalidated. Government-benefit programs (such as labor-power training, Social Security, retirement) would have to be provided on an equal basis. In short, the amendment establishes the basic principle of equality of men and women under and before the law.

Impact

It is important to bear several other principles in mind, however, in order correctly to understand the impact of the amendment. There is, for instance, a constitutional right of privacy. Hence, the amendment would not (as some opponents have charged) require such things as coed bathrooms. Neither would laws based on physical characteristics unique to one sex —— such as voluntary medical leave for childbearing —— be invalidated. Such laws could stand because they deal exclusively with one sex without discriminating against the other. Also, the fact that sex discrimination has mainly operated against women does not mean that abolition of such discrimination will not help men. Equal rights works both ways. As an example, under the amendment alimony would be equally available to husbands and wives after divorce, depending on individual needs and capacities.

Some labor groups have expressed concern that the amendment, in the name of equality, would strike down "protective" legislation, won by unions years ago, providing special provisions for women workers with regard to minimum wages, rest and meal periods, work-type restrictions, childbirth, hours of work, and weightlifting.

Labor should take into consideration, with reference to such legislation, the fact that a basic principle of American jurisprudence known as the "benefit extension/burden restriction principle" will be in effect under the Equal Rights Amendment (as under other constitutional provisions). Under this principle, a law clearly bestowing a benefit upon one group must have such a benefit extended to *all groups; a law clearly imposing a burden on one group must be invalidated. Thus,* in general, labor legislation that confers clear benefits upon women (rest periods, for instance) would be extended to men by the amendment. Laws that plainly exclude women from benefits (for example, by forbidding them to take certain work they wish to take or to voluntarily work certain hours for extra pay) would be invalidated. Thus, labor has nothing to fear from the Equal Rights Amendment.

Proper Enforcement

What labor does have to fear, though, is the capitalist society in which the amendment will have to operate. Hard as it is to get reform legislation passed, it is

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WHAT'S INSIDE

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Sirabella's Views On Labor Page 3

New Haven teachers listen to details of new contract at meeting on March 20 at Wilbur Cross High School. Teachers accepted the contract to officially end a six-day strike. See story page 2. (M-T Photo by Nick Heyer)

Legal Aid Cuts Make It "A Long Way To Downtown"

by Joelle Dominski
Modern Times Staff

The impact of federal fund cutbacks has already hit the New Haven Legal Assistance Association (LAA). Offices in the Hill, Fair Haven and West Rock have been closed within the last month. Now people from Fair Haven, West Rock, Wooster Square, and possibly Dwight, who cannot afford lawyers have to go downtown to get free legal aid.

"It's a long way to go downtown and transportation is terrible," explains Sally Brooker, who was an outreach worker in West Rock, and is now based at the downtown office. According to Carlene Williams, Director of the Fair Haven Neighborhood Corporation, this means for her area that "most people won't get served."

The Hill is in a somewhat different situation, since their Howard Ave. office will remain open, although the Congress Avenue office will close. But their staff will be greatly reduced. Ken Kreiling, senior attorney in the office is especially worried about what will happen in the summer when the case load usually goes up.

Due to federal cutbacks, another Legal Assistance Office has been forced to close its doors to those who cannot afford lawyers. **(M-T Photo by Nick Heyer)**

First Cuts in '71

Federal funds first came to Legal Assistance offices in 1966, through the Office of Economic Opportunity. From that time on the service grew and gained state and model cities funding. By 1971, 11,000 cases were being handled a year and counsel provided to 40 neighborhood-based groups, including summer programs, drug programs etc.

In July, 1971 the first cut came--the agency lost $186,000 in state funding from the Department of Community Affairs on an annual basis. The next year only 7,000 cases were handled. Now, Model Cities has been cut by between $50,000 and $60,000 and OEO cutbacks are not yet known.

The basic goal of LAA is to "provide poor people the same kinds of legal resources that a person able to hire a private lawyer can expect to receive," says Frederick Danforth, Director. Many of the people who use LAA in the Hill and Fair Haven are Spanish-speaking, and often do not speak English. Many are Black. In these areas as well as West Rock, those who come to legal aid are under-employed, unemployed, or welfare recipients. "With the unemployment crisis we have been representing more and more people," said Sally Brooker.

Possible Restrictions

"This is a very difficult time for legal services," said Atty. Kreiling. He pointed

See COMMUNITIES, page 7

Community Notes

BIG BROTHER RECRUITING DRIVE

The Big Brothers of New Haven are going to have a recruiting drive for the next four weeks in New Haven. Big Brothers will be at the Chapel Square Mall on April 7 and 14 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. There are 25 boys currently waiting for "big brothers." (See **Modern Times** October 1, 1972).

N.O.W. MEETING

There will be a meeting of the New Haven Chapter of N.O.W. (National Organization for Women) on Thursday, April 5, at 8:00 p.m., at the Connecticut Mental Health Center, 34 Park St. (near Oak St.), Room 133. Parking in front and back of building.

All interested persons are invited to attend.

If you have any questions, please call either: Margaret Fine --387-5744 or Beverly Stern -- 777-5217.

THE BUSES ARE BACK

Continued from page 1

time, bus drivers have a funded pension plan which is not tied to the continued existence of the Connecticut Company.

Meskill has guaranteed to subsidize the full operating deficit. The money will come from the Public Service Tax Fund (same proposal as last October). This fund also fully subsidizes the Penn-Central in Connecticut.

State responsibility for bus transportation will be transferred from the Public Utilities Commission to the Department of Transportation (DOT). The same procedures and standards will be maintained in terms of fares, cuts in service and routes. Public hearings must be held prior to any change. Thompson of the ATU said that bus drivers had worked under that system for years and could continue to do so.

The contract between the Connecticut Company and the Department of Transportation provides for full funding of any operating deficit. This includes a guaranteed 5% profits for the Connecticut Company on the gross operation of the bus system.

Transit Districts

The Transit Districts right now are only paper organizations with advisory and publicity powers. Meskill originally wanted these Districts to take responsibility for funding the buses. When this move failed he forced their creation as a condition for state funding.

The Transit Districts must give feedback to the DOT on local needs. The present subsidy carries a two year limit. Meskill expects the Districts to take over at that time after two years experience of public responsibility for bus transit.

However, there is little chance that the Districts could assume management of the bus lines unless there are some political and economic changes in the state.

According to Thompson, a widening crack in the Federal Highway Trust Fund may provide the necessary money to fund mass transit. A new source of funds coupled with some significant changes in state political leadership, said Thompson could lead to the Connecticut Transportation Authority.

Thompson claimed that shortages in fuel, pollution, and congestion will lead to increased demand for "fare-free" bus service. The question is when.

Teacher Strike Educates Board Of Ed.

Modern Times Staff, New Haven Federation of Teachers

After 13 months of negotiations, a six-day strike, and court-ordered talks with the Board of Education, New Haven teachers finally have a new contract.

Over one year ago, in March 1972, the Board of Education was offering teachers increased workload, larger class size, and a longer school year with no pay increase. The New Haven Federation of Teachers stood firm against the Board's regressive demands through mediation and arbitration.

SEE BOX FOR CONTRACT SUMMARY

Teachers felt that the arbitration decision awarded at the end of August provided a reasonable basis for a new contract. However, the Board of Education still held out and rejected the decision they had originally requested.

Board Unsuccessful

During the course of the fall, the Board of Education tried unsuccessfully to hold up teachers' earned increments and to impose unilaterally some new contract terms. By the time March 1973 came around, the Board had withdrawn most of its roll-back demands but still was unwilling to offer little more than a status-quo contract.

On Tuesday, March 6 over 900 teachers took to the streets. The decision to strike was difficult and painful to make. But the choice for teachers was clear: either accept a contract which would damage the teaching profession and education in New Haven or strike.

The issues in the strike concerning contract demands were clear: teachers wanted a salary increase to meet the rise in the cost of living and reasonable improvements in working conditions and fringe benefits.

Frustration and Isolation

There was also more behind the overwhelming support and solidarity shown by teachers in the six-day strike. Many *teachers feel a great sense of frustration* and isolation in their jobs.

The problems in teaching in urban schools are immense; supplies are short and support facilities are hard to come by. Teachers are, for the most part, on their own in dealing with discipline problems, reading problems, emotionally disturbed children and supply shortages.

For the first time during the strike, teachers were able to really talk about their problems with other teachers in the system. They met for the first time teachers in schools one or two blocks away.

This frustration in dealing with the inadequacies in the New Haven school system was shared by many parents. It was no accident that many parents supported the *teachers on strike and their demand to* close the schools.

Parents Joined Picket Lines

Parents joined the picket lines at Brennan, Edgewood, West Hills, Baldwin, and Jepson in equal defiance of state law forbidding teachers' strikes. It became clear that educational improvements have been won by teachers' strifkes in the past and could be won in the future.

The present contract ratified by teachers on March 20, does not expire until June 1975. There are many issues still unresolved. A strong teachers' union and a more active community can improve education -- contracts and strikes are not the only route to progress in education.

CONTRACT SUMMARY

For 1972-73

Increments plus an additional salary payment of $300 to teachers at maximum (13 or more years experience). Improved medical and life insurance benefits.

For 1973-74

Increments plus an average 3% increase. Reduction in class size by one to a firm maximum of 32 in grades K-12. Previously there was no class size limit for kindergarten. Improved major medical benefits.

For 1974-75

Increments plus an average 4% increase with a possible cost of living increase to a maximum of 4.5%.

For All Three Years

1. No layoffs for teachers currently employed under the appropriated education budget of the city. No layoffs of teachers paid under special funds unless the position is eliminated and there is no other available position in the system for that teacher.

2. No arbitrary time limits to be imposed by the Board for going on or returning from maternity leave. The ability of a teacher to work primarily determined by her doctor. The use of sick leave for maternity leave to be determined by the courts.

3. If transfers become necessary because of changes in school organization, those wishing to be transferred will be given preference in order of seniority; any *involuntary* transfer will be made in order of juniority.

4. The Federation and the Board will establish a committee to work on the planning of educationally innovative programs geared to the specific needs of the children of New Haven.

5. The Board will consult with the Federation representatives on matters of educational policy, on any matter not covered by the contract and on the administration of the contract.

UNC UNION WINS SOUND CONTRACT

Strike Secures Employees' Rights As Company Takes Off

by Henry Tamarin
Modern Times Staff

The two week old strike at United Nuclear Corp. ended Sunday morning as the membership of Local 8 - 718 of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers voted by an overwhelming majority to accept the proposed two-year contract and return to work.

The United Nuclear Corp. is moving all their production facilities to Montville, closing down their New Haven operation. Only about 5% of the approximate 550 union members will be able to make the transfer because of the unavailability of a adequate housing in the area and the four hour round trip.

At issue in the strike was the inadequacy of the company's severance pay and pension plan for those employees staying behind. Considered a major victory by the union is the company's acceptance of the proposal that employees who decline to transfer to Montville are still eligible for all benefits provided under this current contract, including severance pay. If an employee declines transfer to Montville, the company can place him in a comparable job in New Haven at the same or higher rate of pay. The union member is still eligible for severance pay even if he declines this inter-plant transfer.

A Good Contract

In his Sunday morning presentation of *the contract at the Melebus Club, Art* Hanlon, president of the union, stated that both he and the committee felt that this was the most significant aspect of the the strike, although there were additional improvements in the new contract. These included a 6.25% salary increase the first year, upward reclassification of 7 jobs, improved contract language pertaining to overtime pay, vacations and increases in medical benefits.

The new contract is retroactive to March 5. Union representatives felt that once the contract is adopted, layoffs may begin within a month. Union officials urged members to report all contract breaches by the company to the union as the company begins the process of transfer and layoff in the New Haven plant.

Union Teachers Speak Out

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Sirabella To Business: "Labor Is People's Lobby"

by Jeffrey Bannon

The Temple Street Businessmen's Club got a chance to hear the "other side" when Vincent Sirabella, President of New Haven's Central Labor Council spoke at a luncheon meeting of the group on Monday, March 19th. He outlined his view of the role of the labor movement in recent times to about one hundred men and women.

Sirabella opened his talk by setting out the two objectives towards which a progressive labor movement should strive. "It should work for the well-being of its members, but also for the general welfare," he said; "labor can be a people's lobby, representing the unrepresented."

However, Sirabella was quick to point out that this ideal is often forgotten. "The image of top union leaders as fat, old defenders of the status quo is too often true," he admitted. "Many have developed *a banker's mentality.*"

Labor's Record

Yet, for those desiring social progress, "the labor movement is the only crap game in town," Sirabella said. He mentioned the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts which were passed with strong union support as positive examples of labor's record.

Scoffing at the idea that the creators of the "new politics" -- the elitist liberals -- could provide the needed leadership, New Haven's labor leader explained that for reasons of social class, "the liberals just don't understand the people's problems."

Sirabella ended his talk on an optimistic note, however. Describing the shift of the labor force away from manufacturing and toward the service industries, he noted that the leaders of the growing unions were the most progressive in the labor movement. He cited the farmworkers and the hospital workers as examples of unions which recaptured the excitement and vitality of the labor movement at its best.

Speaking before the Temple Street Businessmen's Club, Vincent Sirabella calls for a People's Lobby led by as well as representing the working people.
(M-T Photo by Nick Heyer)

Picket Is Arrested For Being Run Over At A&P

by John Flannelly

You're picketing a local supermarket in support of the United Farm Workers, and someone attempts to run you over with his car! The driver ought to be arrested, right? Wrong, the picket is arrested! That's what happened to Martha Martinez last month while picketing the A & P in East Haven, which as a chain has been a consistent buyer of non-union lettuce.

The picketing, urging shoppers to boycott A & P's as an expression of sympathy for the plight of California farm workers, was organized by Martha Martinez, Henry Lowendorf, Tony Dominski and Jonathan Livingston on January 19th. The incident in question occurred on January 27th.

According to Ms. Martinez, she and two nuns from an East Haven school were in a legal picketing area, on a sidewalk in front of the A & P, when a middle-aged man in a station wagon sped towards them and drove his vehicle onto the sidewalk in such a way as to clearly endanger their lives. He then leapt from his car, and began shouting and screaming insults at the three. After crossing the picket line and entering the store, he later emerged with his wife who was quick to join him in menacing the pickets with more threats of bodily harm.

The police were subsequently notified and Martha Martinez gave them a six-page statement. She was assured that the police would act upon her complaint. On the following Monday, Ms. Martinez was informed by telephone that she had to report to the police station to verify her statement. A good deal of bureaucratic confusion followed, and on March 7th, she was arrested on charges on breaching the peace -- filed, as a counter complaint to hers -- by the people she had encountered at the supermarket. She is scheduled to appear in court on April 3rd. It is her contention, however, that the charges have no substance and represent a clear infringement of First Amendment rights.

In spite of all of this, the picketing goes on, and with some success. As of March 9th, a minimum of 368 potential shoppers had been persuaded not to enter the East Haven A & P. And the store itself has acknowledged the legitimacy of the boycott by pasting a UFW eagle on its window, perhaps only as a ploy, for there have been no assurances that in the future it will not sell non-union lettuce.

More significantly, A & P as a whole sells approximately four million heads of lettuce per week, most of it non-union. So the need is still there, the need to support Martha Martinez both in her cause and her case, a need deserving of community attention.

Labor Notes

TAX ACTION DAY PLANNED

"Take The Rich Off Welfare" -- that's the slogan of the coalition of labor, senior citizens, ethnic groups, community organizations, farm groups and others who are sponsoring Tax Action Day April 16.

The campaign will lead up to rallies across the nation on April 16 which is the deadline for filing income tax returns. Also planned are educational seminars and petitions to Congress. Prior to that day there will be awards to "Tax avoiders of the Week", focusing on corporations that escape taxation through loopholes.

from Victory Lodge 609 News

CIVIL RIGHTS in the WORK FORCE

The U. S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit of New York has upheld a lower court order directing the Corning Glass Company to pay more than $600,000 in back wages to 960 women and men employes who were paid at rates less than those set for workers of the other sex in violation of the Federal Equal Pay Act. . . . HEW's Boston Office of Civil Rights has released a report charging the University of Connecticut with "underutilization" of women and minorities in its work force and requiring the adoption of affirmative action programs to bring UConn into compliance with federal guidelines.

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom is sponsoring a

Rice and Tea Supper

benefit of Medical Aid to Indochina

Guest speaker Dr. Marjorie Nelson Yale Medical Center

Dr. Nelson spent two years in Vietnam, was captured by the National Liberation forces and held for two months, and then returned to her hospital.

Saturday, April 7, 1973

$1.50 311 Temple Street 6:30 p.m.

Center Church Parish House

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Editorial

Nixon Policies Wound Veterans

The hoopla surrounding the return of prisoners of war from North Vietnam obscures the fate of most veterans of the war in Vietnam. Most soldiers did not return to free cars and wardrobes and job offers. In the words of one New Haven veteran, "They dumped you off a plane and gave you your papers and that was it. '

These are the "grunts" – not the highly-skilled, high-status pilots, but the ordinary ground soldiers. They are often the sons of the same white and black working people who bore the brunt of fighting in World War II. For many the future is dim.

The unemployment rate for all Vietnam veterans last November was 14%; it was 23% for returning black and Puerto Rican soldiers. Unemployment compensation only lasts a year, however. When the National Alliance for Business promised to provide a certain number of jobs to returning veterans they played it up in all the news media. 10,000 veterans turned up at the "job fair ' for 200 jobs. The Connecticut State Employment Service for awhile gave veterans special treatment--earlier access to their job listings. "So you could turn down the same dead-end work a day before everyone else,' said a veteran.

It is not merely a question of no jobs, however. Men going for job interviews hide the fact they were in Vietnam because people will think they're either drug addicts or potentially explosive personalities. Veterans bear the psychological burden of the Vietnam War the way no other segment of American society does. There is no period of psychological readjustment for most veterans as there is for prisoners of war. Said one ex-Marine, "It is actually possible to be on the street in America twenty-four hours after walking around with a gun in Vietnam. '

A veteran who admits to drug addiction in order to get treatment will not receive an honorable discharge. Any soldier with a less than honorable discharge, however, is not considered a veteran in the eyes of the Veterans' Administration. For them there are no jobs, no unemployment compensation, and no schooling. The society has simply denied them all access to a living.

Congress has voted an increase in the benefits of the G. I. Bill, but Nixon is holding up a portion of the funds. In addition, the Bill's disability category has been widened to include more benefits for the psychologically-disabled, but the funding has remained at the same level so the physically-disabled will get less. In this way veterans are forced to struggle against each other for the little help the state provides.

There are 6 million Vietnam era veterans. Their needs - for jobs, education, disability benefits, and drug treatment – must be *met* not buried beneath a few hundred bomber pilots. **Modern Times** has always opposed the war in Vietnam but those who were forced to fight it should not be the ones to pay for our government's policies.

Struggle For Equality, Protection

continued from page 1

even harder to get a business-dominated government like that of the United States to enforce it properly. For example, the Fifteenth Amendment passed after the Civil War provided : "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude." And everyone knows what happened to that law of the land during a hundred years of "enforcement" by an indifferent federal government and anti-black local authorities and judges.

The same thing could happen with the Equal Rights Amendment if women's groups do not maintain constant pressure on the government and courts to see that it is carried out. Labor groups must also maintain constant pressure to see that anti-labor local authorities and courts do not use "equality" as a pretext for striking down any meaningful aspects of protective labor legislation. Instead of opposing the Equal Rights Amendment, labor should gear itself to lead the fight for public awareness and legislative declaration of the "benefit extension/burden restriction" principle. State laws –– such as the proposed AB 710 in California supported by Union Women's Alliance to Gain Equality –– explicitly extending protective legislation to men should be passed to preclude local obstruction of the correct interpretation of the amendment and this principle. The amendment provides for a two-year transition period between final ratification and its going into full effect. This period should be used by labor for such legislative efforts as part of the development of a comprehensive occupational health and safety program for all workers. Such legal and lobbying efforts are expensive. Thus, all progressive citizens should see it as a priority to help labor with its expenses in this effort

Only sharp struggle by many people over a long period of time can fully enforce major reforms in a social system. As the great woman labor organizer Mother Mary Jones said: "Pray for the dead and fight like hell for the living!"

Write On

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

At the March 18 meeting of the AFL-CIO Young Unionists in Bridgeport, members expressed their outrage at the recently announced campaign to repeal OSHA (The Occupational Safety and Health Act), being mounted by some right-wing organizations. In a unanimously adopted resolution, the Young Unionists condemned the OSHA critics, who want the whole program dismantled as a "threat to private enterprise," stating that the legitimate criticism of OSHA is that it is not yet fully and strictly enforced. The YUAL members, who included foundry workers, carpenters, laborers, electrical workers, utility workers, and service employees, said:

"We are the people who work in the shops, in the service industries, and on the construction sites. We know the dangers of work and the daily problems faced by most workers in the area of health and safety. The need for the strong enforcement of OSHA is crystal clear, as last year nearly 15,000 workers were killed and 2,000,000 injured on the job. Those who are launching this anti-OSHA campaign either have no understanding of the work situation faced by most Americans or simply do not care at all about the safety and health of the working people."

The Young Unionists hope to work with the Bridgeport Labor Council in defending and publicizing the OSHA program to both union and non-union workers.

Fraternally yours,
John J. Del Vecchio
Secretary,
AFL-CIO Young Unionists

To The Editors:

During recent years there has been a phenomenal growth of the workers' movement in Spain. The Franco regime has been threatened by the growth of democracy, and constant repression of the workers has resulted. A proof of this repression is the jailing of ten labor leaders in Carabanchel, near Madrid, since last June for "illegal association." Their "crime" was trying to organize their fellow workers. They are accused of being members of the National Co-ordinating Committee of the Workers' Commissions.

The public prosecutor has demanded harsh sentences for these courageous men, now known as the "Carabanchel Ten." The trial is expected to take place within the next few weeks. Observers in Spain believe this trial could be even more important than the famous Burgos Trial in December 1970 in which a number of Basques were sentenced to death and later had their sentences commuted to life imprisonment following protests throughout Spain and around the world.

"This trial is a political process without any legal basis," commented one informed Spaniard. "It is designed to demoralize the workers' movement and the anti-Franco opposition. We must win this battle and stop these monstrous sentences from being passed. This is important not only to save these ten workers but to make sure it does not become a precedent for more repression."

Labor unions throughout the world have expressed their opposition to Franco's repressive measures, but American labor has not yet protested the denial of human rights in Spain. If you are a member of a trade union, ask your union why they have not declared openly their solidarity with the Spanish to organize trade union activities, or write a personal protest to the Minister of Justice, Madrid or to the Spanish Ambassador.

Sincerely,
Karen Hudes

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MODERN TIMES is published by the American Independent Movement (AIM) as its political organ. Work on MODERN TIMES is done by volunteers, both members and non-members of AIM. The political views of AIM are given in the editorial. We encourage contributions of the New Haven community in the form of articles and letters.

MODERN TIMES is a paper to tell the story of and by the people of New Haven. We don't get that kind of news in commercial papers run for profit. There is no place else where the work and play of people who aren't rich is considered important enough to write about. There is no place else in New Haven where the problems of working women and men are told by them instead of by their bosses. There is no place else where hunger, bad housing and education, lack of health care and police harassment that people live with is told by them.

We live in the richest country in the world. But only a few people get to use most of this wealth for themselves. We must all work together to claim the wealth we all helped to create. Then there would be no need to strike for a few more crumbs, waste our resources and labor on rockets and bombs, or waste the lives of our young men in wars like Vietnam. We would produce what we need—not what is profitable.

The American Independent Movement has been working since 1966 to get people together against the rich, powerful few who run New Haven and the whole country. We want everyone to have good housing, good education, child care centers, recreation areas, decent health care and decent jobs.

STAFF: David Adams, Gary Benenson, Matt Borenstein, Ed Breuler, Jerry Cohen, Ellen Comisso, Vittorio Comisso, Lillian Dimow, Joelle Dominski, Art Fleischner, Paul Gill, Sam Goodwin, Stanley Heller, Liz Henderson, Nick Heyer, Eileen Hoffman, Peter Jackson, Lynne Karsten, Karl Lechow, Alice Mick, Ray Milici, Patti Miller, Laurie Nussdorfer, Jim Jordan, Renee Poirier, Peter O'Connell, Naomi Resnick, Ruth Resnick, Florrie Ricciuti, Bob Sherry, Henry Tamarin, Ross Thompson, Sergio Verillo, Rick Wolff, Karen Wolff

How To Deduce Tax Deductions

by Rick Wolff
Modern Times Staff

People have been asking me to give some tax tips in this column. O.K., I will, Instead of the big items, I am going to talk about some little details that you might have missed. If you can't do anything about these tips, some of them may at least make you laugh (or cry).

The rules for filling out your 1972 Federal Income Tax (Form 1040) are very strict. Consider these tought words, "You Must Report Embezzled or other Illegal Income." The Government wants you to pay taxes on anything you might have stolen during 1972. Of course, this detail would be of no interest to the good readers of **Modern Times**, but maybe somebody has a friend who . . . .

How about this bit of justice. The interest earned by those Americans rich enough to own State and local bonds is free from any income tax, but the strike benefits paid to members out of union dues during a strike are subject to taxation and must be declared on Form 1040.

More Deductions

Here's an item that too many people miss. You can deduct from your income (before figuring how much tax you owe) moving expenses, if you had to move because of your job or in order to get a new job. You can deduct the cost of moving your furniture, personal belongings, family and the costs of selling an old house and buying or renting a new place. For details, read the Internal Revenue Service Publication 521 and get Form 3903.

You can also deduct from your taxable income the money you spent on Connecticut's gasoline tax during 1972. Here we lucky Connecticut residents get a special deal (or the shaft, depending on your point of view). We get to deduct more than residents of any other state in the Union, because our tax on gas (10 cents per gallon) is higher than that of any other state.

You can definitely not deduct "Payments for drugs that are against the law," although you can deduct most other medical expenses which you had in 1972. You can deduct part or all of the value of property stolen or damaged by fire, storm, car accident, etc. For this, check IRS Publication 547.

To Get Help

The Internal Revenue Service is required to provide you with assistance in filling out your forms. Their New Haven office is at 1211 Chapel Street (772-0800). Also, page 27 of the booklet which comes with Form 1040, contains a form which you can use to order various free IRS publications that explain in more detail just what you can and cannot do about your Federal Income Tax bill.

Now if you are at all worried about how the IRS manages to provide advice about and collect and process and check your tax forms, just think about this. The IRS which handles our tax system is the same agency that handled Nixon's wage and price freeze so brilliantly. Feel better?

Giving Tax Buck Could Curb The Money Bags

Modern Times Staff

There's been a lot of publicity lately about Internal Revenue Service Form 4875, which gives you a painless way to donate $1 to the Democratic or Republican parties. It's likely to be the only painless thing about paying your taxes this year.

The real significance of this political-donation gimmick, however, has received almost zero publicity. All of us really should give a buck when we fill out the income tax form, because this Presidential Election Campaign Fund (as it is called) is the first serious effort to put any lid on big spending in American presidential campaigns, and the first serious effort to stop presidential candidates from being held hostage by big money contributors.

The point the IRS stresses in its ads is that every taxpayer filing a return (or both taxpayers on a joint return) can pay $1 less taxes and have that $1 put into a Fund which will help pay for the 1976 presidential campaigns.

Costs Nothing

It doesn't cost you anything: you pay the same taxes, or get the same refund, as you would have otherwise. IRS simply keeps $1 per person less, if you fill out Form 4875 telling them to, and will put that $1 into the Presidential Election Campaign Fund.

You can designate either the Democratic or Republican parties to receive this $1, or you can direct it to a non-partisan general account which will be divided up between the parties. In future years, any other party which manages to poll as much as 5 per cent of the presidential vote will also be eligible for your designation or for a split of the non-partisan account.

But why bother, you ask? Obviously, you might say, this is just a plot to help the unresponsive national political parties collect money easier. Why do that, you say, when neither party really wants to make the political changes you want and need?

Here's the unpublicized, and rather astounding, feature of this Presidential Election Campaign Fund: it is NOT available to either the Democrats or the Republicans just for the asking.

Here's how it will work, as presently provided by the law setting up the Fund:

Either party may accept up to $21 million from the Fund for its 1976 presidential campaign. However, **a party which accepts any money at all from the Fund may not spend more than $21 million altogether on the 1976 campaign.**

If the Fund has as much as $21 million put into it by taxpayers for a particular party, that party will get the $21 million and will not be allowed to raise any more. If there's less than $21 million, the party may only raise additional contributions to get it up to the $21 million ceiling.

In either case, the presidential candidate of the party which accepts this ceiling —— and if they don't accept the ceiling they can't have any of the Fund's money —— has at least a fighting chance to be freed from dependence on and subservience to the big money people whose contributions dominate and control the campaign.

Hard To Pass Up

Now, either the Democrats or the Republicans can say they don't want whatever we, the taxpayers, put in the Fund for them, and then they're free to raise and spend as much as they want. If a lot of taxpayers use this free way to give a buck, however —— and they probably will —— it will be awfully hard for the presidential candidates to turn down a ready-made pot of millions of dollars.

There are quite a few things that could go wrong with this hoped-for reform. One likely end run would be for the parties to accept $21 million for their presidential campaigns and then channel their rich contributors' money into congressional, state, and local elections, still maintaining the influence of these moneybags within the party.

However, this Fund set up through the IRS is the only serious plan around with any chance of success to eliminate the most corrupt aspects of presidential politics.

Considering that the Republicans captured the White House last fall with expenditures of fifty million that they admitted to, and the Democrats also spent twenty-five million, and also considering that putting a buck in this Fund won't cost you anything, it seems well worth a try.

Peace Has Fighting Chance

by P. J. *O'Connell*

No contribution to peace seems significant next to the spirit, skill, and suffering of the Vietnamese people, who defeated the U.S.-Saigon military machine after years of massive struggle. Nevertheless, all the weary years of writing letters, vigiling, petitioning, marching, picketing, sitting in, protesting, demonstrating, resisting the draft and the military had their effect and raised some effective obstacles to the escalations of Nixon and Johnson.

The peace movement is needed now more than ever because Richard Nixon is making it clear that he intends to prop up his puppet, the dictator Nguyen Van Thieu in Saigon, as long as possible. Thieu has openly declared, and Nixon and Kissinger have repeatedly hinted, that there is an American promise to come to Thieu's rescue with renewed bombing if he starts to topple. And Asia swarms with U.S. troops and civilian officials.

Thus, the peace movement must not see the ceasefire as an occasion for dismantling itself but rather as an opportunity for renewing itself and reaching out to more people, over and beyond the maneuvers of the White House. The peace movement grew from scattered handfuls in a few areas in the early 1960's to millions all over the country by the early 1970's. Hardly a town of any size has not had some form of peace action by now. Yet despite its broad scope and some important labor components, the movement never really reached the point of actively involving masses of non-white people and white working people.

The movement has also been hampered by internal problems. Two important ones are whether to organize around the single demand for U.S. withdrawal from Indochina or the variety of issues raised by the war, and whether to emphasize the moral outrageousness of the war and the need for solidarity with the suffering Vietnamese or the war's domestic material impact and its damage to the self-interest of the American people. The movement today must clearly link the moral issue and the material issues, the people of Vietnam and the people of America.

One way it can make this link is by organizing around issues where there is a clear parallelism between what is happening in Asia and what is happening at home.

Deadly Parallels

Vietnam has been economically devastated by war. Prices, rents, taxes, and unemployment skyrocket while wages freeze and jobs fall. Millions of poor lack basic social services in crime-racked, drug-ridden cities while handfuls of businessmen and politicians bask in luxury and vice.

Despite the differences of degree, the parallels with the U.S. scene are still obvious. The war has "Vietnamized" many American cities because of its distorting effect on the economy. The massive misallocation of resources to war is a boomerang now coming home. In December of 1972, for example, prices rose at the fastest rate in 22 years, led by food costs that soared at the rate of 19 percent. This in the face of enormous corporate profits that have shot up to a new high—$53 billion after taxes in 1972.

And yet the new budget for fiscal 1974 allocates $1 billion for support of U.S. Forces remaining in Southeast Asia and almost $2 billion more for military assistacne to South Vietnam and Laos. But these are only the tip of the fiscal iceberg. Economic assistance to prop up the Thieu, Lon Nol, and Souvanna Phouma regimes in Southeast Asia, with associated doles to military-run Thailand and the new Marcos dictatorship in the Phillippines, may add another $2 billion and bring the total up to $5 billion.

Emphasizing such increasingly distorted priorities as revealed by these facts should

See PEACE FORCES, page 7

Open Line Slavery Survives On Local Farms

by Rev. Wilfredo Velez
Coordinator, META

One of this nation's biggest immoralities is its treatment of the Migrant Workers. For many years now, thousands of men, women and children have been working under the most oppressive and inhuman conditions we have seen in this country since the liberation of the slaves. Today's conditions in the different migrant workers camps is the modern version of slavery.

The State of Connecticut, like many other Eastern States participates in this immoral exploitation of human beings. Every year, an average of 5000 men come from Puerto Rico under a contract signed by the Shade Tobacco Corp. and the Government of Puerto Rico. The workers do not participate in any way in the drawing of the contract, which will condemn them for three to six months of very hard labor, underpaid and abused by the farmers who have them at their complete disposal.

In the camps, in addition to poor health conditions, hundreds of men live by themselves most of the time drunk. At the end of the season many end up owing money to their bosses. This causes the destruction of the family unit. Even in the theaters in this country there are slogans that indicate that we as a nation care about family life, we even encourage families to worship together, because as the saying goes, "Families who worship together, stay together."

This principle is not applied to the poor people, especially the Puerto Rican migrant workers. Their family life is destroyed and the damage done to their children is beyond repair. Thousands of our children end up in prisons and a life of crime which can be directly traced to the migration into the different camps. This is why people who claim to be Christian or even people who have a deep sense of justice and dignity cannot stand by and allow these conditions to persist.

To this effect, a Regional Organization was formed March 9, including representatives from about seven different denominations including the Roman Catholic Church META, as our organization is called, is an Ecumenical Ministry to the Puerto Rican Farmworker. META, which literally means goal, is an attempt to confront these conditions from a radical Christian perspective.

We have been able to recruit ministers, priests and nuns who will be visiting the different camps this season and will encourage the workers to fight back in order to better their conditions. We will also attempt to bring in warm clothes, since most of the workers come from Puerto Rico with tropical clothes and are forced by the cold weather to purchase warm clothes from the store owned and operated by the Shade Tobacco Corporation and the different corporations in the other states where our workers are brought.

We will be going around the State showing films and presenting their cause to the public who in many instances does not know the conditions exist. We are calling on different groups to allow us to come to speak to them and present the Puerto Rican Migrant workers conditions. Please direct any mail to the Rev. Wilfredo Velez, 512 E. Washington Ave., Bridgeport, Conn., 06608 or call 334-4975. We will be gald to come to your group or organization.

Business Fights Safety Law

by Connecticut Occupational Health and Safety Group

The first round of a fight against a weak state law on occupational health and safety was fought last month in Hartford.

The House Committee on Labor and Industrial Relations has drafted a law which could replace the current federal Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OHSA) law. Under the federal law any state has the option to write and enforce its own law provided the state law is "effective" or "more effective" than the federal statute.

Watered Down Law

The labor forces felt that the proposed state law was a very watered-down edition of the federal law, and would set back the struggle for healthy working conditions. Len Dubee, representing the UAW, stated that the law set a highly questionable policy of experimentation with workers' health as a means for setting standards. New standards for exposure to toxic substances would only be set when worker became visibly affected; and even if affected they would have no right to petition the state to set standards. Members of our group pointed out that the state law as proposed would not even have standards for more than 14,000 substances which the HEW recognizes to be toxic. These include substances like epoxy resins which are used in paints and are now endangering the health of painters.

Management Praises Law

On the other side of the fence, management forces praised the law and the climate it would create. Jim Martin of the Connecticut Business Industries Association pointed out that the law would preserve the "traditionally good relations" between the state Labor Department and Connecticut business.

Harmon Snoke of the Manufacturers Association for Southern Connecticut stated that Connecticut's history of "good safety" implies that the state should implement its own standards. He emphasized that much responsibility for safety is borne by employees and they should be required to use all available safety equipment provided by employers.

A delegation from Yale University including three medical doctors and a public health student made recommendations to strengthen the law. These included suggestions that safety inapectors also investigate some health hazards, that there be more frequent inspections than the 5 year interval proposed, that there be careful statistical analysis for setting health standards, and that there be penalties established for violations found during routine inspections or inspections done as the result of a complaint.

They also urged that all Connecticut companies be required to keep a hazardous material inventory and that the enforcement agency publish a regular bulletin announcing new standards and changes in regulations.

Health Most Important

In summary, the labor forces emphasized that workers' health was the most important consideration and that workers should have the right and responsibility to participate in the identification of hazards and in the creation of new standards. They emphasized that wages are paid for a job done-- not as compensation for lost health.

Management onthe other hand argued for the "convenience" of having fewer regulations, for closer relationships between inspectors and employer in enforcement, for the idea that workers should be held responsible for their own safety. They insisted that voluntary compliance was the best means to enforce the law.

The occupational health project, and many union people have drafted ammendments to the state lawwhichwould make it more effective, but it remains to be seen whether the Republican legislature will adopt any of them. If the law is passed as is, it could face a court challenge on the grounds that it is less efective than the federal OHSA law.

After Mine Union Elections

A New Day Is Dawning Underground

by Bob Sherry
Modern Times Staff

This is the second of two articles on The United Mine Workers. The first article by Mike Holodnak appeared in the January 15 issue.

Energized by renewed membership activity, the United Mine Workers (UMW) are taking a tough stance toward mine owners and unresponsive union officials. The recent election in the UMW saw the victory of Arnold Miller as representative of the Mine Workers for Democracy (MFD) grass roots group over the Boyle machine.

The MFD , heir to a number of rank and file miner movements, promises to return control of the union to the miners. Their success is based on miners demand for an end to corruption and the need for security of both active and retired miners.

What will the new officials do to live up to their promises and win over unionists who opposed them in the election? Polls show that working miners tended to vote for the Miller reform slate, while pensioners, frightened by Boyle's rhetoric, tended to vote for the Boyle ticket.

A reassuring sign for pensioners from the MFD was their successful court case forcing the outgoing UMW leadership to exptend pension benefits to 17,000 previously excluded retired miners.

Bring Down Pensions

Another important task is to continue the fight against the corrupt Boyle machine. Boyle left the top post with a $50,000 pension, hastily voted by the executive board that he himself appointed. This is five times what a working miner makes and 33 times what a pensioner receives. The MFD has pledged to bring down the high pensions and pay of officers and raise those of the miners.

Miller has used the power that Boyle himself used to clear the executive board of its favorites and appoint interim members interested in reform. The important difference is that all members of the board will now have to be elected and accountable to their district's union members. The elections are to be held by June.

There are other positions being refilled to bring the union's resources under the control of the membership. Miller asked for the resignation of True Davis, the $142,000 president of the UMW'S National Bank of Washington. Union funds held by its own bank had been earning the union no interest! The MFD wants the union's bank to aid its membership, not rob them.

Emphasis on Safety

The forecast of business journals like **US News and World Report** is for tougher negotiating ahead on the part of the union. Union demands will include an emphasis on pensions and safety. In addition to a pledge to increase soft coal pensions from $150 to $200 monthly, the MFD has promised to increase hard coal pensions from $30 to $200 monthly. To do this the union will demand larger contributions from companies to the pension fund. To protect miners' incomes during the Nixon regime, one wage demand will be for a cost of living clause in the contract.

See MINERS, page 7

Modern Times is pleased to call its readers' attention to:

25th ANNIVERSARY TRIBUTE
to
RABBI ROBERT E. GOLDBURG
FRIDAY, APRIL 13 8:15 pm
Congregation Mishkan Israel
785 Ridge Rd.
Hamden, Conn.
Guest Speaker
Rabbi Leonard I. Beerman
Leo Baeck Temple Los Angeles, Cal

Communities Hit Hard By Legal Aid Cutbacks

continued from page 2

out that in addition to general funding cutbacks, there is a possibility that with national funds there may be restrictions on suits against federal, state or local governments. This has been opposed strongly in Congress for the last several years.

LAA here has handled about 25 such cases a year. One example is the case of welfare recipients living in public housing who were being charged more than 25% of their income for rent, which is against the law.

LAA attorneys took this case to Connecticut Federal District Court on behalf of housing tenants. Judge Jon Newman stated in his opinion of the case: "This suit is a bewildering example of the plight of the citizen confronting bureaucracy! It is also powerful evidence, if any is needed, that all the high-minded social legislation Congress can enact will not achieve the results intended unless legal service agencies are given sufficient funds and freedom to represent clients like these plaintiffs by bringing actions against government agenicies to make sure that the requirements of statutes are obeyed."

Who Will Fight State

"If LAA can't handle our cases then who do we get to fight the state?" asks Matilda Gibbs, president of the Welfare MOMS. She points out that "the majority of welfare recipients have used LAA for one reason or another."

The Association handles a wide range of cases including housing, consumer, criminal, eviction, motor vehicle, unemployment compensation and social security cases, as well as fair hearing for the Welfare Department. LAA handled welfare mothers' complaints against the flat grant system.

According to Ken Kreiling, the reduced staff in the Hill may have to eliminate all their criminal lawyers and leave four civil lawyers. Of the 4,000 cases they serve a year, one third have been criminal and motor vehicle. Their $225000 a year may be reduced to about $130,000.

Kreiling hopes that with all the lawyers in one office and with increased specialization, they will become more efficient in handling a maximum number of cases. One proposal under consideration is centralizing divorce cases.

Forced to Consolidate

Fred Danforth explains the dilemma: "We have been forced to consolidate into a smaller number of offices in order to make maximum use of our reduced staff, but this means that we are not as accessible to the neighborhood residents."

He continued, "In terms of the promise of equal justice which has been held out to the poor, it must be kept in mind that cutting back on these services represents a commitment broken."

"For a change to come to West Rock, it would need a change to come to the nation," said Sally Brooker.

"There are cuts in so many areas people don't know which way to turn," says Tillie Gibbs. "It's 'survival' time for a majority of people in this country." She said the cuts in the city will be "just like the flat grant hitting all of New Haven" and concluded that "unless all join in, welfare recipients, unemployed, young people, we'll die of poverty."

Hospital Workers Celebrate Win

Dietary workers from Yale New Haven Hospital celebrate their successful March I NLRB Election to be represented by Local 1199 Hospital Workers Union. More than 200 of the worker group, their families, and fellow-workers from other departments attended the victory party at the Water Street Labor Temple. The dietary workers expressed the hope that those from other YNHH Departments will soon have the same reason for their own victory parties.

(M-T Photo by Joseph Taylor)

Angela Davis Bookstore's Monthly Forum
VICTOR PERLO

discusses his new book

THE UNSTABLE ECONOMY

SUNDAY APRIL 8 2:30 pm

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Refreshments .... Bring a Friend $1

Any contributions accepted from students and unemployed

Peace Forces Could Win Greater Support

continued from page 5

move many poor and working people into the ranks of the peace movement out of need for simple economic survival if nothing else.

In Vietnam Thieu can only retain himself in power by mass repression directed against his political opposition. In the area of South Vietnam controlled by the Saigon administration, meetings, demonstrations, political parties, and political activities of all kinds, including the publication of literature, are banned. The press is muzzled. Hundreds of thousands of political prisoners languish in jail.

At home, police and judicial crackdowns on blacks Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, and Indians intensify. The Nixon administration moves against the press and media, jailing reporters. White House-initiated spying and sabotage is directed against Nixon's political opponents, as the Watergate quagmire has shown. Striking unions are threatened with mass arrests. Nixon's political repression is an issue that unites moral and material concerns for more and more Americans, particularly non-whites.

Vets and POWs

An area of great concern for the peace movement should be the plight of the veteran. 2.5 million men (mainly of non-white or white working-class backgrounds) served in Vietnam over the years. Hundreds and thousands of them now lie crippled and maimed in hospitals, or stand in unemployment or welfare lines without jobs in a disrupted economy, or pace back and forth in the prisons and drug centers of a sick society. The "patriotic" Nixon administration offers them no aid—there is no G.I. bill of rights for Vietnam vets—and cuts back already existing programs, even for paralyzed vets who have lost all their limbs and their eyesight. Meanwhile, war-devastated North Vietnam grants extensive benefits to its vets.

The alienation of the U.S. vets and their families can be a potent force in moving against the military-industrial complex if the peace movement will fight for their needs. The malign neglect of the veterans by the blood-drenched administration stands out in stark contrast with the public relations hoopla and plush jobs being provided for the returning U.S. POWs.

Nixon has referred to draft and war resisters as a "few criminals who must pay the price for their mistake. Amnesty means forgiveness. We cannot provide forgiveness for them." There are actually 100,000 resisters living abroad. In addition, for most years of the war, 80,000 men per year vanished into U.S. communities, receiving anonymous protection against federal authorities. These hundreds of thousands are equally of white middle-class, white working-class and non-white backgrounds.

They should be given a big welcome home for their heroic and correct opposition to an immoral and unconstitutional war. They do not need to join the peace movemen —their actions made them a very important part of it. It is the real war criminals from Lieutenant Calley (now residing in a comfortable cottage frequently visited by his girlfriend) to Commander-in-Chief Nixon who should pay for their "mistakes." General Telford Taylor, U.S. Chief Prosecutor at the Nuremberg Trials, has said that Nixon and his cohorts are as guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity as any Nazi. Their fate should be the same.

In conclusion: to renew itself and continue its vital work, the peace movement should consider issuing a call for a national demonstration in Washington and local actions around the country, both to take place in May when Phase 1 of the ceasefire expires. That call would center itself around the following demands:

1. Strict adherence to all provisions of the ceasefire agreement, including those relating to democratic liberties for all South Vietnamese.

2. Passage of the Church-Case and Bingham bills providing that no more funds may be appropriated for U.S. military reinvolvement in Indochina without prior Congressional approval.

3. Cuts in the military budget and no more cuts in social services.

4. Extensive benefits for veterans.

5. Passage of the Abzug-Conyers-Dellums bill providing unconditional amnesty for all classes of war resisters.

6. Prosecution of U.S. war criminals.

Peace still has a chance!

Miners Opt For Change

continued from page 6

In the last contract the right to strike over unsafe working conditions was bargained away. Such failure on the part of the old leadership has lead to the sacrifice of miners' lives. Owners find it more profitable not to take the steps necessary to protect miners. The fatality rate in US mines is 2 to 3 times as great as Eastern and Western Europe.

Safety Precautions

Over the last few years, the reformers have gained much support by their fight against black lung disease and for safer mines. Such steps as drawing off the methane gas and spraying the mine with cold water could reduce both black lung and danger of mine explosions and fires.

During the election campaign and afterwards, spokesmen indicated that the strike may be used to protect lives and insure the improvement of safety conditions.

Such demands will bring an end to the close relationship between union officials and the mine owners who quietly supported Boyle in the recent election. Now contracts will have to be approved by the membership and not just accepted by a small committee of union negotiators.

Rank and File Take Control

Behind all these changes and demands there is a common feature. The UMW has been invigorated by a membership interested and active in its union. The new leaders are backed by and dependent upon this politically aroused membership. The recent election shows that unionists can get their union back in their control, even when the rules and leadership is opposed to such self-control.

The UMW has been a bulwark of American unionism, and renewed member activity together with efforts to organize the unorganized can restore the UMW as an example to the unions and working people of this country.

On The Job Life At Sea Is Often Rough

by Lynne Karsten
Modern Times Staff

The following is an interview with Hank Murray, a member of the Seafarer's International Union, (SIU) AFL-CIO. Murray, a New Haven resident, has just returned from 11 months at sea as a crew member on an oil tanker.

What's it like to be an employee of Aristotle Onassis? Not much different than any other job according to Hank Murray. Actually, Murray was not directly employed by Onassis. The ship he worked on is owned by Victory Carriers, an American Company owned by Onassis. Ever since Murray was a young boy, his dream has been to travel around the world. With this trip and a previous trip 3 years ago to Southeast Asia, he has practically realized the dream. His love of the sea plus the ability to work outdoors also helped to make Murray seek out this type of job.

Hank Murray relaxing after 11 months at sea. (MT Photo by Pat Sandacata)

Murray's tour on the oil tanker, which was 715 feet long, 115 feet wide and weighed 49,800 tons, began with a UN mission to Bangladesh (carrying grain). The rest of the time the ship shuttled oil between the Persian Gulf and the Far East. On the return trip to the US, the ship carried crude oil. Murray was aboard ship as an ordinary seaman with an apprentice rating in the Deck Department.

Most ships are divided into three departments, deck, engine and steward. The deck department maintains all of the gear on the deck, plus cargo gear. There are two classifications of workers in the Deck Department--watch standers and dayworkers. Murray's job as a watchstander included four hours of watch (one of which is taking a turn at the helm) and then eight hours off. When the person's watch time is not dur*ing the regular working day (from 8 to 5)* the watchstander usually has the opportunity to earn overtime by helping the dayworkers. However, overtime can depend on the particular company.

Since the maintenance costs on a ship go up heavily after 10 years, overtime tends to stop with some companies. Murray was fortunate to ship out with a company which offered as much overtime as one could handle. His overtime work included chipping rust, doing a lot of painting, and other maintenance. The shuttle run for his ship between Singapore and Saudi Arabia lasted 28 days and usually the ship would be in port for about 6 days. A watchstander still has to stand watch when in port and also assist in loading or discharging products. In his off-time, Murray exercised in the ship's pool and read.

Unionization Brings Change

Salaries for people in Murray's category start around $450-500 a month. An able-bodied seaman (which usually requires 3 years of experience) can average over $1,000 a month with overtime. Union dues average about $150--$200 a year. According to Murray the union serves many vital purposes. The fact that seamen no longer have to bring their own bedding, sleep 12-15 to a room, and eat out of a communal pot (as they did in the '30's) is a result of unionization.

Today each ship has a ship's committee composed of three elected and three standing members. While there is a union contract which is supposed to be followed, maritime law plays an interesting part in conflicts between the captain and crew. Direct orders from the captain must always be followed: if you refuse you are guilty of mutiny. Murray and his fellow crew members did find a way around this dilemma by scheduling job actions, when necessary, which were not in direct opposition to the work they had been assigned.

Some shipping companies also seem to encourage union crew members to leave before the run is over. Although these people are scheduled to be replaced by other union men, when the union office is halfway around the world, the captain and the company do not worry too much about such rules. Also since the company has to pay the new seaman's transportation to the ship location, the captain and company may look closer for replacements. Many times replacements are aliens who are in debt to someone for the job (perhaps the captain or shipping company) which can result in a more passive crew. On Murray's ship of the original 33 who shipped out, only 11 stayed the entire time. The real power of the union is usually felt only in US coastal waters, where the possibility to prevent the ship from sailing exists.

'Life on the Beach'

Although Murray apparently enjoyed his life at sea, he does not plan to continue working as a seaman. He mentioned missing his friends and "life on the beach" as drawbacks of the job. He said, however, that sailors he knew had planned to sail for only a few years--but those years had extended and extended. Most of the seamen Murray knew found it difficult to remain in one place for long and as a result had problems maintaining commitments (according to Murray the divorce rate is high amoung seamen over 35). Continuously living with the same people at sea presents problems too, but Murray feels seamen are among the most tolerant people he has known.

Just as in other American industries, nowadays more and more companies are looking for ways to hire non-union or foreign workers at cheaper wages. One way sailing companies accomplish this is by running their companies under foreign flags. American shipping companies now fly the flags of Panama and Liberia, two countries which are notorious for less strict regulations, no taxes, no unions, or yearly inspections. While these companies are making more profits, Murray informed me that most accidents at sea occur with vessels flying the flag of one of these two countries and these ships cause a major share of the oil slicks. In the shipping industry, these ships are known as Flags of Necessity by the company (who says they need to do this to survive) and Flags of convenience by the unions (who say they do this to make more profits).

Obviously, this makes it difficult to get into the union. The SIU takes only people 16-21 and then puts them through a training program for several months. In addition, the SIU and other shipping unions have large training programs to update and retrain the seamen for work on highly automated container ships, which are just around the corner. Although the work on ships is steady, it is not necessarily permanent. Most seamen are out for a year at a time, then must re-register at the union hall in their home port and wait for another job to come up.

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PERISCOPE
On The Environment

by John Flannelly

Martha Martinez, a supporter of the United Farm Workers, has alerted us to the fact that the Federal Food and Drug Administration has identified large quantities of California lettuce as being heavily contaminated with insecticides.

A substantial amount of this lettuce is still being shipped out, however, and a good deal of it seems to be making its way into the stores of Connecticut. At least 100,000 cases of it, according to Ms. Martinez's estimate, have already been delivered to Connecticut wholesalers.

Martha Martinez, Don Cameron and several others have pressed the Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection for an explanation as to why these deliveries have not been blocked, but to no avail.

A spokesman for the department claims that the whole affair does not lie within the jurisdictional authority of the agency, and that, in any case, the FDA has assured it that the suspect lettuce is perfectly all right. Asked if the department intended to test the lettuce, he declined to answer.

In response to this official indifference, Mr. Cameron plans to have tests conducted independently, and to make public the results. In addition, he and Ms. Martinez hope to sponsor a rally at the end of the month to protest what appears to be an abandonment of responsibility by state consumer protection agency.